hardships to the semi-literate workers especially in Goa; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to abolish the condition of emigration clearance to obviate the difficulties being faced by such workers ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

Setting up of Mega Power Projects

6168. SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether any Committee has been set up by the Government for the selection of sites for new mega power projects in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Committee has submitted its report;

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith sites identified for the purpose, State-wise; and

(e) the time by which the work for commissioning of projects is likely to be started ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A 'Site Selection Committee' under the Chairmanship of Member (Thermal), Central Electricity Authority has been set up to identify suitable sites for setting up of mega power projects in the private sector.

(c) and (d) The Committee was required to submit the report by February, 1997. However, the time for submission of report was extended and it is now expected to be submitted by end June, 1997.

(e) Commencement of work at any project will depend on its formulation and development subsequent to the prioritisation of the project after consideration of the recommendations of the Site Selection Committee.

Gas based Power Stations

6169. SHRI ANCHAL DAS : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the daily requirement of gas for the gas based power stations in the country and in Orissa;

(b) the linkage sanctioned by the Government against the requirement; and

(c) the details of any proposal for increasing the gas linkage in near future in respect of Orissa ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) Around 25 MMSCMD has been allocated to gas based power station against which the supply is around 18 MMSCMD. No allocation has been made to any power station in Orissa. There is no proposal for allocating gas to projects in Orissa as the gas projected to be available is fully allocated.

Transportation of Goods through Bangladesh

6170. SHRI ISWAR PRASANNA HAZARIKA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the question of India being allowed to use a corridor through Bangladesh to transport its goods was discussed in the meeting of the Joint Economic Commission of the two countries held recently in Delhi during March, 1997;

(b) if so, whether any preliminary agreement in principle has been reached in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether there was consensus on expansion of border trade as a part of greater cooperation in trade and commerce in the aforesaid meeting; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : (a) to (e) The 5th meeting of the Indo-Bangladesh Joint Economic Commission was held in New Delhi from March 10-12, 1997. On cooperation in transportation sector, the Commission recalled Article 8 of the Trade Agreement concluded between Bangladesh and India in 1980, which provides for "mutually beneficial arrangements for the use of their waterways, roadways and railways for commerce between the two countries and for passage of goods between two places in one country; through the territory of the other". The commission also recalled Article 12 of the SAPTA Agreement which provides for "developing and improving communication system, transport infrastructure and transit facilities for accelerating the growth of trade within the region", concluded in 1993. The two sides reaffirmed their earlier commitment to the above agreements and agreed to take appropriate measures towards the further fulfillment of these agreement.

On border trade, the two sides discussed the question of trade in local produce between areas in India and Bangladesh at selected points contiguous to the border between the two countries. It was agreed to set up a Group of experts to make recommendations on the modalities of border trade.

Minimum Wages

6171. SHRI VEERABHADRAM THAMMINENI : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to non payment of minimum wages by private organisations to its employees.

(b) whether it has also been brought to the Government notice that implementation of Vth Central Pay